
CITY LIVABILITY AWARDS OFFICIAL ENTRY - Title Page

**A Program of The United States Conference of Mayors
and Waste Management, Inc.**

**In Recognition of Outstanding Mayoral Leadership in
the Development and Support of Programs that Enhance
Urban Livability**

Mayor

City Contact Person For Application

Name

Title

Agency

Address

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Telephone

Fax

Mayor's Press Secretary

Name

Title

Address

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Telephone

Fax

Form of Government of City

Population

Per Capita Income of City

Number of Years the Mayor has been in Office

**Please duplicate this form on 8 1/2 x 11 paper, complete the
form, and mail it in with your application.**

2) [EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - TO BE DONE]

One page max!

3) I. Newark is a Livable City

Diversity and opportunity, in a safe environment under strong mayoral leadership in partnership with the private and non-profit sectors, make Newark a livable city. With one City Livability award for environmental achievement already on our mantel under Mayor Sharpe James, we believe that we are comparable to the best America has to offer in **any and every** aspect of urban life.

The concept of livability is subjective - every year, dozens of publications produce rankings based on vastly differing criteria, with the consequent widely varying results. In Newark, our activist city administration, in full partnership with the private and non-profit sectors, addresses quality of life issues on a continual, planned basis. While we would not dare contend that we have collectively perfected ourselves as a community, we can justifiably claim continued, **sustained** improvement on all livability factors that count.

These include, but are not limited to, the **environment**, where our 1991 award speaks for itself; **public safety**, where we have increased police presence, reduced crime, and maintained one of the nation's best big city fire departments; **health and human services**, where we have made inroads in the treatment and prevention of common urban ills such as AIDS and homelessness, and significantly reduced our poverty rate; **housing and community development**, where new residential construction has been steadily increasing under Mayor James in the face of a sluggish economy, and community-based organizations are thriving in spite of reductions in federal and state aid; **infrastructure**, where major improvements in our water and sewer systems, and our world class transportation network, have been made and are underway; and **recreation, the arts and cultural affairs**. New recreational facilities and events have been developed as a top priority of Mayor James; arts and culture are to be addressed as the subject of this application.

In general, what others may see as weaknesses are viewed as strengths by the James administration. Newark is an extraordinarily diverse and dynamic city in terms of demographics. With strong and inclusive direction from city government, this diversity expresses itself in terms of artistic and cultural enrichment, private business enterprise, and neighborhood revitalization.

Just this year, urban affairs scholars have addressed issues such as how public images and discourse about cities develop and change, and how our national "ambivalence" about cities affects public policy. In Newark, under Mayor James, we notice a distinct difference in the way both residents and non-resident suburbanites are talking about our city - words and phrases like "renaissance" and "coming back" are a regular part of the regional discourse now; new, positive images are in the making. Under Mayor James, ambivalence about Newark is evaporating, and people are starting to recognize the reality - Newark is a **livable city!**

II. Newark's Arts and Culture

● Description and Five-Year History

The arts and culture have always been integral to the life styles of people living in Newark. During the 40's and 50's, the city was a virtual mecca for people seeking entertainment, arts and culture, with outlets such as the Newark Opera House and small cabarets showcasing the likes of the late Duke Ellington. Scores of persons who went on to world fame used Newark as a springboard.

During the 60s and 70s, although Newark continued to produce many of the stars on today's world stage, the City's support for and promotion of the arts was weakened, in part due to its high level of socioeconomic distress. Nevertheless, we remained home to the nationally acclaimed centers of Symphony Hall, the Newark Public Library and the Newark Museum, as well as cultural institutions such as the Carter G. Woodson Foundation, Arts High School, Newark School of Fine & Industrial Art, Garden State Ballet, Newark Community School of the Arts, Newark Boys Chorus School, and the New Jersey Historical Society.

When Sharpe James was elected Mayor in 1986, our Division of Recreation was changed to the Division of Recreation and Cultural Affairs (DORCA). Along with a new name, the Division's focus took a new direction, the provision of arts and cultural programs for the citizens of Newark, and technical assistance to organizations and individuals interested in promoting the arts. Over the years, program highlights have included a tribute to the late writer, James Baldwin, presentations by writers Richard Wesley, Marta Moreno-Vega, Skitch Henderson, Dave Valentin, Claude Brown, Philip Roth, Jane Cortez, Amiri Baraka, Addison Gayle and others (*** mention others to show multi-culturalism**).

DORCA co-sponsors regular programming with other Newark-based cultural groups, and produces several publications annually that list the City's arts and cultural offerings. From late spring until early fall, the City's parks and plazas are alive with concerts, exhibits and other cultural expressions, largely as a result of DORCA's efforts.

Along with our increasing level of regular programming over the past few years, special initiatives are regularly launched. The most spectacular of these, in terms of benefits not only to the city but also the entire metro area, is the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC). Awarded to Newark in 1989 by a technical commission appointed as a result of the vision of then-Governor Thomas Kean, the NJ PAC is a \$150 million, world class development project that will have a profound impact on not only the arts but also on our local economy.

In 1989, with significant city government support and cooperation, the Newark Museum was reopened after extensive renovations

involving the adaptive reuse of neighboring buildings. The project, designed by Michael Graves, won numerous awards for what was already considered one of the nation's premier regional museums.

In 1990, the city administration made a commitment to devote all necessary resources to the development of a long-languishing project, the Krueger-Scott Mansion Cultural Center, the mission of which is to be the premier facility focusing on the interpretation of the historical, artistic and scholastic achievements of African-American peoples worldwide through a variety of programming activities. This project, like the NJ PAC, has drawn attention and contributions from not only local but also state and federal sources.

In 1991, as a special tribute to one of Newark's own, the late Sarah Vaughn, a week-long series of events bearing her name but now known as the Newark Jazz Festival was born. Highlights have included performances by many world renowned artists, including the Count Basie Orchestra (1991), Nancy Wilson (1992), Tony Bennet (1992), and Mel Torme (1993).

In 1992, again with city government support and cooperation, first run movies returned to Newark after several years' absence. The following year, a unique city administration initiative came to fruition with the opening of a multiplex movie theater in our Central Ward, which has been long deprived of cultural facilities.

There are several city government-supported art and cultural organizations in Newark, including a jazz-oriented radio station with a wide regional following, cable television programs, and year-round festivals, all working tirelessly to enrich our quality of life. Those entities receiving direct city government support include:

- City without Walls art gallery and programs
- WBGO Radio Station
- Newark (nee Sarah Vaughn) Jazz Festival
- Newark Museum
- Newark Public Library (five branches)
- Aljira Art Gallery
- Newark Arts High School
- Carter G. Woodson Foundation (arts and cultural programming)
- Arts in-the-Schools Project
- Ensemble Theatre Company
- Newark Community School of the Arts
- New Jersey Symphony Orchestra
- Italian-American Festival
- Newark Symphony Hall
- Black Film Festival
- Krueger-Scott Mansion Cultural Center
- Newark Arts Council
- Newark Boys Chorus School
- Newark Festival of People

New Jersey Historical Society
Puerto Rican Heritage Month
Korean Festival

In sum, this city administration-inspired panoply of arts and cultural activities came into being because the Mayor and Municipal Council agreed several years ago that Newark could not continue to exist as a city without them. Neither the Mayor nor any other community leaders believe that the arts and culture are more or less important than the other major elements that make a city; all believe, however, that without them, civic life is incomplete.

● THE ROLE OF THE MAYOR

Every major local public initiative requires a broad-based partnership with the private and non-profit sectors; every public-interest partnership requires city government to be in the middle of the action; at the center of every government is the mayor. The role of the mayor vis-a-vis his/her coalition partners in projects such as arts and culture is itself a function of the type of city government, e.g., council-manager, strong mayor-council, and the chief executive's leadership style and interests.

In Newark, our strong mayor-council system ^{has} been enhanced for almost eight years by the leadership style and understanding of the significance of the arts and culture of Mayor James. A generation ago, political scientist James David Barber developed a typology of presidential leadership styles that is applicable to chief executives at all levels of government. Barber's "active-positive" style, which he found to be associated with the most effective U.S. presidents, accurately describes the way Mayor James views and carries out his duties.

The key component of the City's revival has been the management strategy of the Mayor--an urban triad--that stresses humanism, technology and collaboration. Hence, The Mayor, as an active-positive executive, defines the tasks that follow from this strategy expansively and is personally involved in the planning, execution and **personal participation** in the wide range of city functions. Mayor James does not simply facilitate the development of movie theaters, he attends the shows; he does not just encourage and support the New Jersey Symphony and Opera to operate in Newark; he attends their performances.

From the day he took office in 1986, the Mayor has done everything in his power, and then some, to support arts activities with real resources, whether their impact is strictly local or regional in scope. For example, at the neighborhood-level, Newark allocated \$60,000 of its Community Development Block Grant funds to one cultural institution; in 1993, a steady, seven-year rise in funding from the CDBG resulted in \$300,000 for nine arts and cultural organizations, as well as funding for in-house, Division of Recreation and Cultural Affairs (DORCA) programming. Only the HUD-imposed limit on spending for "public services" prevents us from spending more.

At the other end of the spectrum, the Mayor, with strong assistance from the City's Congressional delegation in Washington, pressed for and received a 1990 HUD "special purpose" grant of \$1.16 million for the open public spaces component of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, and, with the full concurrence of the Municipal Council, appropriated \$10 million from the city's capital improvements fund for the project.

The programmatic aspects of these activities are all coordinated and overseen by the Division of Recreation and Cultural Affairs which was created by the Mayor when he took office. The capital development components are under the aegis of another of the city agencies directly created by the Mayor, our Department of Development. Therefore, our commitment to the arts and culture as a public policy priority is supported by a strong management component.

● **PROGRAM FINANCING**

We have previously alluded, in general terms, to the substantial increase in financing of the arts and culture under the James administration. Our programming is so diverse, and the public-private-non-profit partnership described herein so extensive, that a full accounting of financing would be very difficult to provide.

City support for local non-profits and ad hoc events, e.g., the Newark Festival of People, is generally from two sources: the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and our municipal operating budget. Our expenditures over the past **five** years for the arts and culture are as follows:

Community Development Block Grants	\$ 1,600,000
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Arts and Culture Share of Division of Recreation and Cultural Affairs' Op- erating Budget	\$ 6,000,000
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The operating budget for DORCA includes personnel and related costs, and funds for programs.

Most non-profit organization budgets are composed of a combination of city, state and foundation funding. Given the central role of City support in leveraging other funds, we would conservatively estimate that our Community Development Block Grant investment alone has stimulated at least **\$10,000,000** in local arts and cultural grants in Newark over the past five years.

Our support for larger institutions is from both federal grants and our capital improvements fund. For the five-year period, our commitment is as follows:

**Newark Museum, including the Ballan-
tine House (historic) and the Billy
Johnson Auditorium**

Capital	\$ 2,000,000
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**Newark Public Library, including
Branches**

Capital	\$ 3,500,000
CDBG (operating and capital)	\$ 45,000

Newark Symphony Hall

Capital	\$ 600,000
Operations	\$ 2,500,000

Krueger-Scott Mansion Cultural
Center

Capital	\$ 3,000,000
CDBG (capital)	\$ 200,000
HUD Special Purpose (capital)	\$ 1,500,000
State Historic Preservation	\$ 465,000

New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Capital	\$10,000,000
HUD Special Purpose (capital)	\$ 1,166,000

The established institutions, i.e., the museum, library and Symphony Hall, have large operating and capital budgets; the Krueger-Scott Mansion Cultural Center has an \$8 million development budget; and the New Jersey Performing Arts Center will cost \$150,000,000. The figures listed here simply reflect the magnitude of the City's direct dollar commitment under Mayor James during the past five years, i.e., in excess of **\$32 million**.

● MEASUREMENT OF PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

The great majority of arts and cultural activities in the city administration's overall program are at least partially funded by federal grants, most by HUD. Therefore, program effectiveness is generally measured in accordance with HUD program guidelines, which require principal benefit to lower-income Newark residents and strict adherence to various related rules and regulations, e.g., preservation of historic properties. Even in the case of projects such as the NJ PAC, where only \$1.166 million out of an estimated development budget of \$150 million is from a federal source, the same standards are required.

Mayor James and the entire city government appreciate and fully accept these standards, which help us to ensure that our own residents benefit most from local arts and cultural projects, regardless of their scope and appeal to larger audiences.

While we employ various measures of efficiency and effectiveness, we generally use the **rate of expenditure** of program funds and the **number of persons** benefiting from the service. Some projects involve a discrete number of beneficiaries, e.g., the Newark Community School of the Arts, which enrolls and instructs up to 2,000 Newark residents annually. Others are generally "open" to the public, e.g., outdoor concert series', and their impact is estimated using census tract data and audience surveys.

For the major arts and cultural institutions, our support is also based on economic impact analysis and public acceptance. This is especially the case with the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, which is projected to have a transforming effect on the city, and is taking unprecedented steps for a regional-level institution of world class quality to incorporate Newark citizens and organized arts and cultural groups into its development and operations.

● QUALITY OF LIFE CONSIDERATIONS

The U.S. Conference of Mayors' City Livability Awards application guidelines state the general case for city support for the arts and culture quite eloquently:

The magic of the arts lies in the emotional and intellectual satisfaction that is personally and uniquely known, whether one stands alone under the spell of a beautiful painting, or as part of an audience of several thousand, applauding festival performers. All this beauty and wonder is to be cherished and nourished in order to connect people to the emotive power of the world around us, and invest more meaning in the ordinary streets and spaces where we live and work.

We believe that we have described a program conceived and implemented under Mayor James that provides all the experiences described in this passage to a large audience of Newarkers and non-Newarkers. While the arts and culture can and do flourish worldwide in wealth and in poverty, we are especially proud that we are helping to provide facilities and services to local residents that they would not have without city government.

The arts and culture can exist or they can flourish. In the United States, this most integral component of our lives has traditionally been considered to be outside the realm of public support; governmental support is minimal compared to other nations. In Newark under Mayor James, we believe the arts and culture to be the very essence of civic life. In a city with a large and diverse minority population, we are especially sensitive to the need to preserve and develop our respective art forms and cultures. Our commitment to a quality of life that prominently incorporates the arts and culture is unwavering.

● ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Mayor James sees Newark's diversity as being its strength. Therefore, what others may view as an uncoordinated melange of activities is regarded by us as an exciting general program that complements the interests and talents of all kinds of individuals and groups.

Newark's arts and cultural programming can best be described using the name of one of our annual events, the "Newark Festival of People." The Mayor's interest is in providing opportunities to people to realize their human potential through the arts and culture, rather than organizing them so as to stifle their creativity.

We believe that our administration's willingness to empower a wide array of organizations with resources, and allow them maximum expressive latitude, is unusual if not unique among city governments. We offer our strong commitment of federal grant funds to such organizations, as compared to many city administrations that operate programs with their own staffs, as evidence that Newark is a livable city in terms of the arts and culture!

III. Major Lessons for Others

We have of course learned a lot from our determination in the face of seemingly meager resources to support the arts and culture. Perhaps the most important lesson is that mayoral leadership can make a difference.

City administrators have a natural tendency to directly operate programs, whether developmental or services-oriented. In Newark under Mayor James, a high percentage of arts and cultural services have been effectively "contracted out," to neighborhood-based non-profits and larger institutions, as a result of the Mayor's commitment to citizen empowerment.

Second, no city can make headway in improving its quality of life through the arts and culture without an agency devoted to programming. The difference in Newark between the James administration and its predecessor demonstrates this dramatically.

Third, mayors must be prepared to personally seek funding from all sectors. Newark's special purpose grants are proof positive that such efforts can make a real difference.

Finally, small investments in the arts and culture can have a major impact that is too valuable in terms of city image and economics to ignore. Not only are our large institutions helping us revise what the world thinks of Newark, but our smaller organizations are doing the same. The Newark Boys Chorus School is one of our leading global ambassadors; the Aljira Art Gallery is attaining international prominence.